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New Chair in Tibetan Buddhist Studies Established at University of Michigan

Chair is the Largest Gift to Study Tibetan Buddhism in North America

(ANN ARBOR, JUNE 27, 2018)—The University of Michigan’s College of Literature, Science, and the Arts has received a gift of \$2.5 million to establish the Khyentse Gendun Chopel Professorship of Tibetan Buddhist Studies, which will further enhance one of the largest Buddhist studies programs in North America. The gift is largest dedicated to the study of Tibetan Buddhism in North America.

Tibetan Buddhism, a tradition of Buddhism practiced in Tibet, Nepal, India, Mongolia, and China, today counts millions of followers around the world.

The professorship is made possible through the generosity of the donors of Khyentse Foundation, which provides support for institutions and individuals engaged in all traditions of Buddhist study and practice. Michigan is only the second Khyentse chair in North America. The first was established at the University of California, Berkeley, in 2006.

“As citizens of a world that is ever shifting, changing and even precarious, we must all seek and contemplate sources of strength and sanity. For centuries, Buddhist study and practice have proved to bring stability and harmony to both individuals and society,” said Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche, founder of Khyentse Foundation. “So in this day and age, it is more crucial than ever that such wisdom be preserved and kept alive in important institutions of learning like the University of Michigan.” Read Rinpoche’s full remarks on this partnership [here](#).

The Khyentse Gendun Chopel Professorship will reside in LSA’s Department of Asian Languages and Cultures. It is named after the radical Tibetan poet, philosopher, and painter Gendun Chopel (1903-1951), regarded by many as the leading Tibetan thinker of the twentieth century.

In fall 2019, the department will conduct an international search to fill the newly created professorship with a faculty member who will teach courses and conduct research to advance knowledge of Tibetan Buddhism. This research will be shared with students and scholars of Buddhism around the globe, enriching knowledge and understanding of an ancient religion whose teachings continue to inspire the modern world.

"Michigan has a long and distinguished tradition of excellence in the field of Buddhist studies," said Donald Lopez, chair of Asian languages and cultures and the Arthur E. Link Distinguished Professor of Buddhist and Tibetan Studies. "This historic gift will allow us to expand both our undergraduate and our graduate programs in new directions. We are deeply grateful to Khyentse Foundation."

About Khyentse Foundation

Khyentse Foundation is an international 501(c)3 nonprofit organization founded in 2001 by Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche. The foundation supports all traditions of Buddhist study and practice, with beneficiaries in 30 countries over the past 17 years. Projects funded include a chair of Buddhist studies at the University of California at Berkeley, a lectureship at the University of Sydney, the digitization of the entire Tibetan Buddhist scriptural canon, endowments for traditional monastic colleges in Asia, a worldwide scholarship program, and numerous other innovative initiatives. Learn more about Khyentse Foundation at khyentsefoundation.org.